United Nations A/57/487–S/2002/1173

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
21 October 2002

Original: English

General Assembly
Fifty-seventh session
Agenda item 37

Security Council
Fifty-seventh year

The situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report describes the ongoing work of the Transitional Administration to implement the Bonn Agreement. It focuses on a number of initiatives to enhance Government capacity, encourage private-sector growth and reform fiscal policy in order to allow the Government to gather revenues and to allocate and disburse them transparently and effectively. The Afghan Government's elaboration of a National Development Framework and Budget has been a key step in this process. The report also provides an update on the various commissions that are mandated by the Bonn Agreement (Civil Service Commission, Constitutional Commission, Human Rights Commission and Judicial Commission) as well as a number of other commissions created by President Karzai on his own initiative at the Loya Jirga.

The report further describes efforts by the international community to provide humanitarian assistance and to support the Afghan Government in reconstruction activities. Significant progress has been noted in the field of health (particularly immunizations), primary education and assistance to returnees (both refugees and internally displaced persons). The report also outlines efforts by the United Nations to support the Government as it defines priorities in the key sectors of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

A key impediment to implementation of the Bonn Agreement remains the deteriorating security climate. While efforts have been made to resolve conflicts between still-powerful leaders in some areas, a number of acts of terrorism and political violence have been perpetrated. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) continues to effectively patrol Kabul, but more emphatic security measures by the international community are required beyond the capital. Notwithstanding this continuing need, efforts are ongoing to build and train a new Afghan army and police force, and to prepare for concomitant disarmament and demobilization of combatants who will not be recruited into State security structures.

02-65106 (E) 281002

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1401 (2002), adopted on 28 March 2002, and General Assembly resolution 56/220 A, adopted on 21 December 2001. It covers the period since the previous report on this item (A/56/1000-S/2002/737), issued on 11 July 2002.

II. Implementation of the Bonn Agreement: progress of the Transitional Administration

2. The Transitional Administration was established at the closing of the Emergency Loya Jirga in June 2002 (see A/56/1000-S/2002/737, paras. 28-42) in accordance with the Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan Pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions (Bonn Agreement) (see S/2001/1154). The Administration, led by President Hamid Karzai, faces daunting tasks in the reconstruction of the country, the restoration of law and order, and the implementation of the remaining parts of the Bonn agenda, including the drafting and ratification of a new constitution and organization of general elections. Moreover, the Administration has to accomplish this in the context of a security climate that remains uncertain (see paras. 11-18 and 29-35 below).

3. During the reporting period, several key parts of the reform agenda announced by President Karzai at the Loya Jirga were set in motion. The President asserted the principle of civilian control over the armed forces by announcing that he was their Commander-in-Chief. A Defence Commission, with a broad representation of ethnicities, was established to work on the reform of the army. A National Security Council overseen by a National Security Adviser started to tackle the proliferation of local conflicts, sending out missions, along with representatives of the Cabinet, to resolve disputes in Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif.

4. The Government continues its efforts to extend its influence and control outside of Kabul. The Ministry of Finance has begun the vital work of bringing provincial government income under central government control. Progress was made when the Governor of Herat, Ismael Khan, remitted customs and passport revenues to the Government. The authorities in Balkh also submitted revenues to the central Government. Negotiations continue with other regional leaders to persuade them to remit to the Transitional Administration revenues collected in their areas. These revenues are often, in addition, the source of local conflicts. Besides reducing the incentive for conflict, the centralizing of revenue collection is a prerequisite of the effective functioning of the Afghan State.

5. The Transitional Administration's National Development Framework presents a vision of the State's role relative to the economy and society. The National Development Framework has three broad aims. The first is to use humanitarian assistance and social policy to create the necessary conditions for people to live secure lives and to thereby lay the foundations of human capital needed to support sustainable economic and social development. The second is to use external assistance to build the physical infrastructure and provide the basis for economic growth, led by the private sector, that can in turn support and build Afghanistan's human and social capital. The third is the creation of sustainable growth, so that a competitive private sector becomes an engine of growth and creates opportunity for

the population, thus serving also as an instrument of social inclusion. The success of this strategy depends on the ability of the State to implement it. To help the Government achieve this, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has been working with ministries to enhance their overall capacity.

6. The Transitional Administration has prepared a preliminary National Development Budget to implement the Framework. The budget was developed through a consultative process that involved the line ministries. The national budget is seen by the Government as its central instrument of policy, allowing it in particular to determine and monitor the development agenda. The budget for the current fiscal year (beginning in March 2002) amounts to $460 million. The Afghan Government expects to raise $60 million of this from its own resources. For the balance, the Government must rely on international donors through the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) (see also para. 44 below).

7. The Transitional Administration has undertaken two ambitious initiatives to spur private sector growth, which is the keystone of its development strategy. First, the Administration enacted a private investment law to replace bureaucratic impediments that had reportedly frustrated a number of Afghan entrepreneurs. Second, the Administration has introduced a new Afghan currency (the "New Afghani"). A nationwide currency exchange exercise is under way to replace with the New Afghani the various currencies now circulating in the country. This is a courageous initiative, which, if successful, will reinforce the economic unity of the country and restore national and international confidence in the currency. It will also reduce transaction costs by reducing transaction risks.

8. In a further effort to promote fiscal reform, the Transitional Administration has hired reputable international companies to assist in procurement, financial management and auditing functions. The use of these firms should encourage transparency, accountability and efficiency, and curb corruption. This, in turn, should increase the confidence of donors and private sector investors in Afghanistan.

9. The Transitional Administration's attempts to fulfil its ambitious objectives have been stalled, however, by limitations in its ability to impose its authority nationwide. The intended policy of replacing the existing provincial governors, and heads of the provincial police, military garrisons, revenue offices and civil administrations with officials drawn from other provinces (see A/56/1000-S/2002/737, para. 39) has, in the majority of cases, not been realized. The Government has been unable to persuade factional leaders to move to Kabul. It has also not been able to enforce a decree that makes all armed groups allied to political factions illegal and orders their dissolution.

10. The Government seems to be succeeding in imposing its authority in some areas, however. Forces loyal to the Transitional Administration's Governor in Khost succeeded in dislodging fighters loyal to the faction leader Pacha Khan Zadran. Zadran had refused to recognize the Kabul-appointed governors of Paktya, Paktika and Khost provinces, and had attacked the city of Gardez several times, inflicting numerous casualties. It is also important to note that none of the remaining key factional leaders has opted out of the peace process, and some have made positive steps in building cooperation with the Government. However, the power of these leaders is not uniformly exercised in the name of the Transitional Administration, its authority and policies, or the interests of the people of Afghanistan as a whole.

11. The most serious challenge facing Afghanistan and Afghans today remains the lack of security; therefore, the most urgent national project remains the creation of security forces that are acceptable to the overwhelming majority of the Afghan people. Reform of the security sector will provide Afghans with the tools to assure their own security and may also facilitate national reconciliation through the creation of a trusted national police and national army. It is now recognized by all that training of soldiers and policemen has to be complemented by comprehensive reform of these two institutions. A debate has at last begun about the future of the Afghan national army, and the Defence Commission is beginning to play the role it was created to play in the formation of the new armed forces. The lead nation on the reform of the armed forces, the United States of America, is working closely with the Afghans, UNAMA and the international community to secure an agreement between the central Government and the regional leaders on the future size, structure and deployment of the new Afghan armed forces. Related to this, it is vital that a clear plan for recruitment be defined to determine how those eligible for the new army will be phased in and others phased out. Numerous obstacles must be overcome before these objectives are met, including, above all, the need for consistent financial support. In order for the new army to become the national army of Afghanistan, rather than an additional army among many, existing private militias must be dismantled and their members demobilized and reintegrated into society. Japan and UNAMA are in the lead to design and implement a demobilization and reintegration plan as part of the process.

12. While the debate on the future shape of the national army is ongoing, efforts to train its soldiers continue. Three new battalions have graduated from training courses conducted by military personnel from the United States and France. However, the problems that existed when this training programme began have not yet been solved: there is a shortage of recruits, each battalion is only at half strength and the Ministry of Defence has said that it is unable to provide weapons, which have had to be imported. Furthermore, after the battalions graduate they are left with no clearly defined role and face difficulties finding suitable barracks, which must be specially renovated for their use. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) has started to run a training course to update the skills of the first battalion of the National Guard that it had originally trained earlier this year. This will ensure that a sense of purpose is nurtured and the number of personnel is maintained.

13. The lack of a unified and effective security structure means that Afghans continue to be exposed to intimidation, violence and crime. This negatively impacts all aspects of the peace process. It creates a vicious cycle in that many who express a wish to give up their weapons feel impelled to keep them so long as they experience insecurity.

14. The work of building a national army represents only part of the necessary security framework. Efforts to form a national police force need to be given added impetus as well. Germany, as lead nation for police reform, has begun to implement a programme to train and equip the police. This programme has made good progress. Eighty police trainers have so far been trained and have in turn begun training 1,549 police officers, including women. The one-year courses will be conducted at the Police Academy, newly refurbished by the German Police training project. The United States has generously pledged to start a training course for junior policemen and to train police trainers from the regions to conduct courses outside Kabul. France will also provide support to the Afghan police, supplying a drug laboratory

and equipment for those working in the anti-narcotics department in the Ministry of the Interior.

15. A one-week seminar held at the end of July at the Ministry of the Interior, allowed chiefs of police from across Afghanistan to define and agree upon a set of national objectives. However, police throughout the country remain woefully under-equipped and many outside Kabul have not been paid for months. The police are therefore unable to provide the basic services needed in the communities that they serve or to fill the security vacuum in so many parts of the country.

16. The Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA) is beginning to cover the basic needs of the police in the Kabul region. This fund is being managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in close cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior and UNAMA. Activities to be covered through the fund include the rehabilitation of police facilities, payment of salaries, training and capacity-building, and procurement of non-lethal equipment. It is hoped that sufficient resources will be provided to this Fund to allow funding activities to be expanded to other provinces soon.

17. The need to eradicate drugs remains one of the most pressing issues facing Afghanistan. Unfortunately, earlier momentum towards the definition of a comprehensive anti-narcotics strategy, including the provision of alternative livelihoods to poppy cultivation, has faltered. For a significant number of Afghans, poppy cultivation remains the only means to earn a livelihood. In the absence of viable economic alternatives, planting of next year's crop has already begun. The Afghan Government is working closely with the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP) and the Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States and Germany to develop and implement a counter-narcotics programme. ODCCP will assist in planning, coordinating and building administrative capacity for the programme. A drug control strategy is expected to be ready by late October for presentation at a consultation with relevant ministries and partners.

18. With regard to its international relations, the Transitional Administration has taken a number of measures to demonstrate its policy of responsible international citizenship. These include the signing of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (see CD/1478), concerted efforts against terrorism and, as mentioned above, a serious anti-narcotics campaign. President Karzai has striven to develop good relations with countries within the region, in particular with the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan. He has expressed his determination to strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with these important neighbours. As he stated to the high-level ad hoc meeting on Afghanistan, held in New York on 13 September 2002: "We extend a sincere hand of friendship to all our neighbours on the basis of mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence." In this regard, I was pleased that during my meeting with President Karzai held at the general debate last September, he reiterated his desire for Afghanistan to resume its place as a responsible member of the international community.

III. Implementation of the Bonn Agreement: the commissions

19. The Bonn Agreement mandates the establishment of a number of commissions, including a Human Rights Commission, a Judicial Commission and a Constitutional Commission. The agreement also provides for the creation of additional commissions as necessary.

20. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has been working on establishing its office and assuming its substantive responsibilities. Specific terms of reference have been assigned to each of the members in line with the Commission's programme of work. This programme will focus on investigation and monitoring, human rights education, the rights of women, and transitional justice. The Commission has already received petitions regarding alleged human rights violations and has begun to advise the Government on appropriate action. It has organized, jointly with UNAMA, fact-finding missions to several provinces to address human rights issues. Its members plan to cooperate closely in the future with the Constitutional and Judicial Commissions in order to ensure that human rights principles and standards are adequately reflected in the future constitution and in legal reforms. The Commission's United Nations-supported two-year programme was presented to donor countries both in Kabul and in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. It is hoped that the strong support of the international community will soon be translated into actual funding of the Commission's activities.

21. The issue of transitional justice in particular was given a tragic yet urgent relevance by rep[illegible] f mass graves in northern Afghanistan. International media focused their int[illegible]on the Dasht-i-Leily site, near Shiberghan, which allegedly contained the remains of Taliban prisoners. In August, the three major political and military factions of the north in a joint public statement signed by General Dostum (Jumbish), General Atta (Jamiat) and Sardar Mohamad Sahidi (Wahadat Islami) declared their readiness to cooperate with investigations provided that these were carried out in an objective and impartial way. In their view, investigations should therefore also address those sites that allegedly contain the remains of people killed by the Taliban. UNAMA and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are exploring the possibility of having several sites investigated by forensic experts simultaneously. In view of the volatile situation in the north, additional security guarantees will be needed. The Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission and UNAMA agree that the investigations should have a low publicity profile and, at the present juncture, be aimed primarily at finding and preserving evidence as well as, whenever possible, returning the remains to the families for a dignified burial. The present situation does not allow for systematic and full investigations of this and other human rights abuses of either the distant or recent past. There are currently no means of ensuring the security and protection of witnesses, and furthermore such investigations would seriously disrupt the fragile peace that the Government and international community are striving to foster and reinforce.

22. UNAMA human rights team has addressed over 40 cases of alleged serious human rights violations, including acts of intimidation suffered by leaders of political groups and civil society organizations. The situation is particularly serious in the central Hazarajat region, and the west and north-east parts of the country, where political and military leaders are trying to prevent any questioning of their

arbitrary rule. Specific ethnic groups, particularly the Pashtuns in the west and the north, have continued to be targeted and are victims of discrimination and violence.

23. The Mission is also looking into other possible patterns of violations: forced recruitment in the north by different armed factions; intimidation within government institutions; and conditions in prisons and private jails.

24. On 19 September 2002, under the auspices of the Ministry for Women's Affairs, UNAMA and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) jointly supported and facilitated a workshop of the Gender Programme Working Group, which included 60 national and international participants. The Working Group built mechanisms for coordination and collaboration between the various actors working in this field, and identified gender programmes for inclusion in the National Development Budget and the United Nations consolidated appeal. Following the positive experience with the Loya Jirga and the creation of the Loya Jirga network (see A/56/1000-S/2002/737, para. 37), UNAMA plans to further collaborate with the Ministry for Women's Affairs and the State Minister for Women's Affairs on a series of national and regional workshops to help prepare selected Afghan women for engagement and participation in the next elections, some as prospective candidates for political posts and the majority as electors. In relation to women's and girls' basic rights, there is cause for concern over the re-establishment at the central level of a Department of Islamic Teaching (*Irshad Islami*) reminiscent of the Taliban era Department of Vice and Virtue. As part of its function, the department has trained and deployed women to promote, in institutions and public places, strict behaviour for Afghan women, including restrictions with respect to their appearance and views.

25. To ensure the independence of the Judicial Commission, its membership is being reviewed. President Karzai has asked the Vice-President, Nematullah Shahrani, the Minister of Justice, Abdul Rahim Karimi, and UNAMA to assist in identifying suitable candidates. The lead nation for this sector, Italy, convened a G-8 donors conference on 17 and 18 September 2002 in Rome. A larger follow-up conference will take place from 19 to 21 December, also in Rome.

26. The Bonn Agreement calls on the Transitional Administration to prepare and conduct general elections within two years of the convening of the Emergency Loya Jirga (sect. I, para. 4). Parties to the agreement requested the United Nations to conduct a voter registration exercise in preparation for the election. In response to this request, members of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat undertook a mission to Afghanistan in August to initiate discussions with relevant Afghan authorities and collect information in order to conduct a preliminary analysis of the requirements for an election. This inherently challenging task will be made even more difficult by logistic and security concerns as well as a lack of basic data. Also, an immediate step required to prepare for the elections will involve the establishment of an electoral management body, to organize and oversee the electoral process.

27. The Bonn Agreement also requires that a new census be conducted (annex III, para. 3 (ii)). Information from the census is needed for sound planning of the reconstruction process, which requires reliable population and development data. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is working with Afghan authorities to prepare for this major undertaking.

28. An important responsibility facing the Transitional Administration is the drafting and ratification of a new constitution. According to the Bonn Agreement, a Constitutional Commission is to be formed within 2 months of the installation of the Transitional Administration, and a Constitutional Loya Jirga to adopt the constitution is to take place within 18 months of that date (sect. I, para. 6). In a modification of the letter of the Bonn Agreement that in no way violates its spirit, President Karzai has created a Constitutional Drafting Commission to prepare a first draft of the constitution. The full Constitutional Commission will be created in six months, once the drafting is complete. The full Commission will finalize and approve the draft that will be presented to the Constitutional Loya Jirga for ratification.

IV. Security

29. The period since the last report has seen a number of serious security incidents, adding to existing fears about overall security in Afghanistan. Attacks have taken place against members of the Transitional Administration and the international community, including the United Nations. These attacks suggest a renewed vitality and commitment on the part of those groups that are hostile to the peace process. They remain a source of serious concern. One day in particular, 5 September 2002, exposed the fragility of Afghanistan's security situation with devastating clarity. On that day, President Karzai narrowly escaped assassination in Kandahar and a major bomb exploded in the middle of Kabul killing more than 25 people. These events, occurring within hours of each other, were a brutal and vivid reminder that there are people intent on perpetuating the cycle of violence in Afghanistan. At the same time, these grave incidents represent a test of the international community's commitment to Afghanistan and must not be allowed to undermine the progress that has been made.

30. Across the country, skirmishes between rival factions still take place. No region of the country has escaped conflict. These conflicts prevent the delivery of aid, erode Afghans' confidence in the future and continue to cause human, social and infrastructural damage.

31. The United Nations itself has not escaped the violence. In late August, a small bomb was placed outside the United Nations guest house in Kabul, injuring two people when it exploded. A grenade was thrown into the compound of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Kandahar at the beginning of August, and it was extremely fortunate that there were no casualties. On 25 August, a guard was injured when two rockets hit the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) compound in Jalalabad, located near a coalition base.

32. The months following the convening of the Loya Jirga have seen an increase in terrorist incidents in the capital; there have been several rocket attacks and bomb explosions which, except for the attack on 5 September, have thankfully resulted in few damages and no casualties. The security situation in Kabul would undoubtedly be far worse were it not for the existence of ISAF under the command of Major General Hilmi Akin Zorlu of Turkey. The Force has played a crucial role in thwarting terrorist attacks and in protecting the government and people of Kabul. ISAF has been working with the Afghan security forces at improving cooperation and intelligence-sharing.

33. ISAF also responded positively to a request by President Karzai to assist the investigation into the assassination of Vice-President Haji Qadir on 6 July 2002. While those responsible for the assassination have still not been conclusively identified, ISAF assistance did result in stronger procedures for protecting members of the Transitional Administration, and a special training programme for bodyguards.

34. The western region continues to be relatively calm. In a positive effort to reduce tension between the Governor of Kandahar, Gul Agha, and the Governor of Herat, Ismael Khan, President Karzai proposed a meeting between the two leaders. General McNeill, commander of the coalition forces in Afghanistan, assisted in bringing the two leaders together.

35. While there has been a disturbing increase in the number of conflicts since the Loya Jirga, regional leaders, the Government and in some cases the belligerents themselves have worked to contain and put an end to the fighting. A case in point is the situation in the north where, after continued bouts of small-scale fighting during the period of this report, a more constructive approach has been adopted by the leaderships of the rival parties, Jumbish and Jamiat. Tensions around Mazar-i-Sharif appear to be abating somewhat after patient and persistent local-level diplomacy yielded increased cooperation between General Atta of Jamiat and General Dostum of Jumbish. In particular, an agreement to disarm the city was reached, and most of the city has been cleared of weapons. The two leaders announced that, in the future, there would be no place for commanders who fight for personal benefit. The intervention of the Joint Security Commission, which includes a representative of UNAMA, has also been successful in ending some low-level conflicts before they escalated or spread. The Commission has been busy working to resolve conflicts, setting up consultative shuras and working on the voluntary disarmament of districts where fighting has taken place. The United Nations, working with other members of the international community and local authorities, will continue to try to build on such progress and replicate it in other areas.

V. Humanitarian relief, recovery and reconstruction

36. During the period covered by this report, the Government of Afghanistan, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations and Afghan communities have been intensely involved in responding to the humanitarian crisis, addressing critical immediate needs. The focus has now shifted to a multifaceted response to rebuilding communities, responding to the many components of food insecurity, creating jobs, improving health care and expanding social services.

37. The United Nations is committed to fully supporting the Government of Afghanistan in implementing its National Development Framework and the corresponding budget process. In contrast with the previous year, the United Nations Transitional Assistance Programme for Afghanistan for the period January 2003-March 2004 will be grounded in a Government-led process and in the Government's priorities for the next 18 months. The process was conducted through consultation with the Cabinet, and ministers were encouraged to establish their own vision and priorities, supported by the Programme secretariats.

38. A visible sign of progress in Afghanistan can be found in the successful campaign to get children back to school. A Government of Afghanistan/UNICEF

survey has confirmed that more than 3 million children have enrolled in 6,500 schools. Girls make up 30 per cent of total enrolment. Of the 70,000 teachers, almost one third are women. The challenge is now to keep these children in school, to rehabilitate existing school buildings, to build new schools where they do not currently exist (many classes are held, literally, under a tree) and to improve the quality of teaching, including ensuring the payment of teacher salaries. Secondary schools and Kabul University are also functioning again.

39. Another sign of progress is the massive return of refugees to Afghanistan. The voluntary repatriation operation, the largest in the world for 30 years, has witnessed the return of some 1.7 million refugees to Afghanistan from (mainly) Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Central Asian States. Of these, about 1 million have returned to Kabul and Nangarhar provinces, and some 300,000 to Parwan, Baghlan, Kunduz and Kandahar. The repatriation process is led and coordinated by the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in partnership with the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development, and the Ministry of Urban Affairs. The challenge remains to assist returnees in rebuilding their lives and educating their children in the communities of return. More than 400,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) have also returned to their areas of origin. In spite of these returns, real difficulties are still faced by other IDPs such as Pashtuns waiting to return to their homes in the north which they left to escape persecution, and Kuchis (nomads) deprived of their means of livelihood. Many others whose home provinces are still affected by drought also remain unable to return. Humanitarian assistance and protection activities will therefore continue to be required for these groups for at least another year.

40. In the food aid and food security sectors, the most recent 2002 FAO/World Food Programme (WFP) Crop and Food Supply Assessment survey suggests that cereal production has improved by over 80 per cent in areas that were cultivated. Limited rainfall and reduced overall cultivation, however, will still leave a substantial food deficit in some parts of the country. Food availability and access will remain most problematic in chronically vulnerable areas such as the central highlands, Badakshan and Ghor province, and in the southern provinces such as Kandahar, Zabul, Paktia and Khost where the drought continues. In addition to targeted food aid, there is a need for sustained investment in the agriculture sector. During the period from July to September 2002, food-for-work (FFW) projects employed an average of over 1 million per month. Owing to resource shortages, new food-for-work projects are being postponed until further contributions become available.

41. The prolonged drought in Afghanistan is having a devastating effect on the underground water resources in 13 provinces bordering Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkmenistan. A coordinated effort is taking place through the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development, with the support of UNICEF and national and international non-governmental organizations, to provide new water sources and deepen dried-up wells for the affected population. During the present reporting period, a total of 55 sets of dug wells and hand pumps, 891 sets of bore wells and hand pumps, 217 bore wells, and 685 latrines have been provided to approximately 500,000 people in the drought-affected areas.

42. In the health sector, Afghanistan has made tremendous efforts to eradicate poliomyelitis and is well on the path to achieving that goal. Millions of children continue to be immunized through national immunization days. Some 6.3 million children between the ages of 6 months and 12 years (70 per cent of the target population) have been vaccinated against measles throughout Afghanistan. These efforts are led by the Ministry of Public Health with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF and all major non-governmental organizations. An ongoing survey by the Ministry of Public Health, supported by the non-governmental organization Management Sciences for Health (MSH) and WHO, will assist in addressing access to health services in areas that lack them.

43. Preparations for the approaching winter continue under the leadership of the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development. The higher-than-expected return of refugees, and the risk of new displacements, remain of concern. There are some positive developments that will, it is hoped, help in responding to the specific dangers of winter. These include increased access to nearly all parts of the country, the flow of more money into the economy, the absence of large-scale conflict and an improved harvest. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction and Development, some 2 million people were identified as the most vulnerable in respect of their need of winter assistance, with a focus on the north, west and central highlands. Subject to the availability of resources, there is still time to expand cash-for-work schemes that target vulnerable groups and to meet the shortage in the food pipeline. With the approach of winter, there is being witnessed an outflow of people from Afghanistan to Pakistan, a trend also seen in previous years. The situation will continue to be monitored closely over the coming months.

44. On 22 July 2002, the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), jointly managed by the Asian Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, UNDP and the World Bank, succeeded the UNDP-managed Afghan Interim Authority Fund. ARTF covers the Government's recurrent budget, investment activities and programmes including quick-impact recovery projects, funding to support the participation of Afghan experts resident abroad in reconstruction efforts, and training programmes for Afghans. Contributions to date from donors have totalled some $81 million, with an additional $60 million expected. In early July, the Fund disbursed $18.5 million to the Government's account to cover urgent recurrent expenditure needs for July and August 2002.

45. There has been some initial progress in information management and dissemination; however, much more needs to be done. The Afghanistan Information Management System (AIMS) is now co-located with the Government and is supporting the Administration in developing national information, vulnerability analysis and nutrition surveillance systems, as well as tracking donor support and aid flows. These functions were previously performed by the United Nations itself, and thus it is noteworthy that they are now under the aegis of the Government.

46. As regards the mobilization of resources through the United Nations Immediate and Transitional Assistance Programme for the Afghan People 2002 (ITAP), $823 million has been committed since October 2001. Approximately $810 million has actually been disbursed in Afghanistan this year. A further $60 million in hard pledges is outstanding.

47. A meeting of the Implementation Group was held in Kabul on 12 and 13 October 2002. Chaired by the Ministry of Finance, the meeting included participants

from all sectors of the Government, United Nations agencies, non-government organizations and donors. It focused on a working draft of the National Development Budget presented by the Government, and also addressed humanitarian issues and coordination mechanisms for the donor community and development partners in Afghanistan. The draft national budget reflected a common set of priorities, articulated in a series of cross-cutting programmes including projects for education infrastructure, urban infrastructure, water resource investment, national governance infrastructure, and transport (major roads and airports), as well as a national solidarity programme. The budget will be finalized in the coming months through further consultations within the Government and with partners.

48. The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) continues to carry out survey, clearance and risk reduction education activities throughout the country, and has expanded its operations into many areas previously inaccessible owing to fighting. Over the past six months the number of Programme personnel has grown from 4,500 to over 7,000, and much of the equipment lost during recent conflicts has been replaced. This has resulted in the clearance of over 4,250,000 square metres of minefields and over 20,000,000 square metres of former battlefields, and the destruction of over 300,000 mines and unexploded ordnance during 2002. At the request of the Transitional Administration, the Programme has developed a strategy to enable the Government to meet the obligations of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer to Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction to which it acceded on 11 September 2002. (I am pleased in this regard to note that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdullah Abdullah, presented the instrument of accession to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, in September.) This strategy will see all high-priority land cleared within five years, and all remaining land cleared in the following five. This will enable Afghanistan to fully comply with its treaty requirements, but will require constant donor funding if the objectives are to be achieved within this time frame.

VI. Mission support

49. Since the Loya Jirga, UNAMA mission support activities have focused on the assimilation of United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSMA) and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan (UNOCHA) personnel and equipment, and the consolidation of the premises, resources, and services utilized by UNAMA in Kabul and the regions. UNAMA and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat are cooperating on a complete inventory of all former UNOCHA assets as a preliminary to determining their distribution among eligible recipients. This effort will be completed by the end of October.

50. Priorities for mission support for the coming period include planning for the next major political milestones — the Constitutional Loya Jirga and the elections — and building capacity for Afghan staff to carry out UNAMA mission support activities. Integrated planning among the components of the mission is in progress to determine their support requirements through the end of December 2003. To enable as many Afghans as practicable to take over supporting functions and further reduce the United Nations footprint, suitable posts for conversion from international

staff to national staff are being identified. Simultaneously, technical and management training needs are being identified and developmental programmes implemented, to include English-language and computer literacy training.

51. At United Nations Headquarters, lead responsibility for UNAMA will shift at the beginning of November 2002 from the Department of Political Affairs to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in conformity with the provisions of my report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387), paras. 126-127. This shift has no implications beyond a rationalization of Secretariat functions as an integral aspect of the ongoing reform process. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations was involved in the management of UNAMA even while the Department of Political Affairs had the lead, and will continue to be very closely involved with Afghanistan, and specifically with UNAMA, after 1 November, particularly in providing policy guidance and expertise in electoral and constitutional matters.

VII. Observations

52. **As the first anniversary of the signing of the Bonn Agreement nears, the broad features of the peace process in Afghanistan become more perceptible and the challenges ahead come into starker relief. The political environment is difficult. The attacks referred to in this report show that adversaries of the peace process have not renounced the use of violence as an instrument to destabilize the Government and prevent the consolidation of peace. They are actively trying to take advantage of popular frustration with the pace of reconstruction, continued insecurity, and abuses by the local commanders which have re-emerged in the wake of the fall of the Taliban. This effort by extremist elements is not aimless. The collapse of law and order between 1992 and 1995 was a key factor behind the Taliban's military successes in subsequent years.**

53. **In order to confront these threats, the leadership of Afghanistan, with the support of the international community have several tools at their disposal. One is reconstruction. The reconstruction of the physical, economic and social infrastructure of Afghanistan is critical to the viability of the peace process. The creation of jobs and new economic opportunities is needed to restore hope and confidence within the population at large. It is also needed to meet short-term goals of the peace process such as the resettlement of refugees and displaced people, demobilization and disarmament of soldiers and ex-combatants and control of the expanding poppy cultivation. In regard to the last-mentioned, I would urge the international community and the Government of Afghanistan to work together to implement a strategy that will combine eradication and surveillance with viable economic alternatives. The enormous task of reconstruction places a heavy burden on the Transitional Administration. To meet the challenge, the Administration will need to increase its effectiveness at national and sub-national levels and expand its resource base. The international community has an important role to play in assisting the Government. UNAMA and the United Nations system will therefore continue to give priority to strengthening the capacity of the Transitional Administration.**

54. The Afghan Government and UNAMA are working together to accelerate the achievement of government capacity, to decentralize assistance and to develop subnational programmes tailored to the needs of individual provinces, and to ensure a more integrated and cost-effective contribution by the United Nations. The national authorities, with the support of the United Nations and other partners, are assuming an increasingly central role in the coordination of assistance. A number of United Nations personnel have been attached to government offices to support the administration in formulating its policies and activities. In the coming months, this support should be further refined, in consultation with the Government, with an overall capacity-building plan that focuses on civil service reform, and the increasing decentralization of United Nations assistance, integrated at the provincial level.

55. Notwithstanding these signs of progress, the Government, regrettably, remains very much under-resourced. The total needs of a country recovering from over two decades of conflict, destruction and drought outstrip even the $1.8 billion generously pledged at the donor conference held in Tokyo on 21 and 22 January 2002 (see A/56/801-S/2002/134, annex, para. 15).

56. One of the most visible signs of hope in Afghanistan is also a factor productive of great stress on the fragile economy and on Afghanistan's ability to recover. I refer to the expectedly large number of refugee returns. I join the Government and people of Afghanistan in expressing once again our gratitude to the Governments of those countries that, for many years, have generously hosted Afghan refugees. Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran have borne most of this heavy burden and their hospitality deserves to be recognized once again. We appeal to them to be patient and to show further understanding towards their neighbour, Afghanistan, as it struggles to take the necessary measures to absorb its returnees.

57. Improved security is a precondition for a successful reconstruction effort. Local militias prevent civilian administrators from fulfilling their tasks, extort tribute from farmers and businessmen and engage in factional fighting which displaces the local population and creates an environment where human rights are easily abused. The creation of national security forces — both army and police — and the strengthening of the justice system are key to the restoration of law and order. The international community has made a commitment to help with the establishment of these new security and law and order institutions; but the success of that undertaking depends first and foremost on the commitment of the major factions that have established a military presence extending over various parts of the country. It is primarily their responsibility to set aside short-term factional interests, prevent the existing divisions among them from driving the country again into lawlessness, and enable the country instead to equip itself with effective, unified national forces. Needless to say, the restoration of security also depends on international assistance. I therefore urge the international community to support this vital sector, the reform and development of which has the potential to provide Afghans with their fundamental right to security.

58. In the short term, the international community, working with Afghan counterparts, can take measures to effectively improve security conditions. Nowhere has this been more concretely demonstrated than in Kabul, where

ISAF patrols regularly and with excellent results. I continue to believe that an expansion of ISAF is the best available instrument to improve security across Afghanistan. Afghans from all regions and all walks of life continue to request this. As my Special Representative informed the Security Council in July: "The expansion of ISAF would have an enormous impact on security and could be achieved with relatively few troops, at relatively little cost, and with little danger to those troops."

59. **This leads to the political dimension of the peace agenda. A primary goal of the Bonn process was the establishment of a fully representative government. The Emergency Loya Jirga and the establishment of the Transitional Administration have addressed some of the shortcomings of the Interim Administration from the point of view of representation; and the 2004 elections are expected to provide an opportunity to complete that process. In the meantime, however, distrust continues to affect the relationship between the central Government and sectors of the population that perceive themselves as disenfranchised under the current dispensation. This estrangement from the political process is of particular concern among Pashtuns, both in the north and in the south. More broadly, it is a fact that the task of political reconstruction of the country has been made more difficult by the legacy of deepened ethnic fractures left by the 10-year civil war. Here, too, it is incumbent upon Afghan leaders, within and outside government, to send a strong signal to Afghan society of their determination to work together, regardless of ethnic background and political affiliation, to see the country through this very delicate phase of its history. And, in turn, we in the international community should send to the Afghan leadership and the Afghan population at large a strong signal that, at this critical juncture, we are equally determined to remain at their side.**

60. **Finally, I would like to once again commend the efforts of my Special Representative, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, and of his staff. The period since the last report has, as described above, been a period of instability in which the international community has been increasingly attacked. Their courage and forbearance under these conditions, and their ability to continue to work diligently and effectively despite these conditions, are commendable.**